

Sunni Scholars Reject IS for ‘War Crimes’

Sept. 26—In an [open letter](#) to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the self-proclaimed head of the Islamic State (IS, also known as ISIS and ISIL), 126 Sunni Muslim scholars thoroughly demolish the group’s religious claims, calling the statements from al-Baghdadi and other IS leaders illegitimate and (quoting the Koran), “perverting words from their contexts.”

EIR’s Hussein Askary, manager of the publication’s Arabic-language website, commented that this is a very important effort by the scholars to take back Islam from “the Satanists.”

The letter, a detailed theological refutation, specifically cites the IS’s murdering of fellow Muslims in Mosul, Iraq, for not bowing down to IS’s ideology; using quotes from the Koran, the letter says this practice is forbidden. Referring to how IS declares Muslims to be non-Muslim and then kills them, the letter says, “The reason this point has been discussed in such detail is because you distributed the books of Muhammad bin Abdel-Wahhab as soon as you reached Mosul and Aleppo.” Wahhab was the founder of the extreme Wahhabite sect, which predominates in Saudi Arabia.

The letter accuses IS of sedition: “Announcing a caliphate without consensus is sedition (*fitnah*) because it renders the majority of Muslims who do not approve it outside of the caliphate. It will also lead to many rival caliphates emerging, thereby sowing sedition and discord among Muslims. The beginnings of this discord reared its head when the Sunni imams of Mosul did not pledge allegiance to you and you killed them.”

Addressing al-Baghdadi, the scholars say, “In your speech you quoted the Companion [of the Prophet Muhammad] Abu Bakr al-Siddiq: ‘I have been given authority over you, and I am not the best of you.’ This begs the question: Who gave you authority

over the *ummah* [the community of Islamic peoples]? Was it your group? If this is the case, then a group of no more than several thousand has appointed itself the ruler of over a billion and a half Muslims. This attitude is based upon a corrupt, circular logic that says: Only we are Muslims, and we decide who the caliph is, we have chosen one, and so whoever does not accept our caliph is not a Muslim. In this case, a caliph is nothing more than the leader of a certain group that declares more than 99% of Muslims to be non-Muslim.

“On the other hand, if you recognize the billion and a half people who consider themselves Muslims, how can you not consult them regarding your so-called caliphate? Thus, you face one of two conclusions: Either you concur that they are Muslims and they did not appoint you caliph over them, in which case you are not the caliph, or, the other conclusion is that you do not accept them as Muslims, in which case Muslims are a small group not in need of a caliph, so why use the word caliph at all? In truth, the caliphate must emerge from a consensus of Muslim countries, organizations of Islamic scholars, and Muslims across the globe.”

A 24-point executive summary details all the theological errors that IS leaders, fighters, and followers make, using the social media videos and audio statements that were reviewed by the authors of the letter.

“You have killed many innocents who were neither combatants nor armed, just because they disagree with your opinion,” the letter says, addressing al-Baghdadi



A rally in Dearborn, Michigan, conveys the attitude of the overwhelming majority of Muslims, expressed also in the letter from Sunni scholars.

and his followers directly. “There is no such thing as offensive, aggressive jihad just because people have different religions or opinions.”

Citing the mass killings in both Iraq and Syria that the IS has carried out in the name of *jihad*, the letter says, “These are heinous war crimes.” It identifies the killing of “250 captives at the Tabqah Air Base in Al-Raqqa [Syria] in August 2014.” The Koran also forbids killing “diplomats, emissaries, . . . journalists,” and especially any “people of the Scriptures,” including, Jews, Christians, and Muslims who disagree with the IS, such as the Yazidis in Iraq, the letter says.

It is notable that there are no Salafis, Wahhabis, Qataris, or Kuwaitis on the list of signers, who are all Sunni scholars. There is one Saudi signer, but he is not a Wahhabi follower. While all the signers are Sunnis (there are no Shi’a signers), it should be noted that the IS claims that it represents Sunni Islam.

Besides the theological demolition of the IS ideology (and consequently the Wahhabi ideology, without mentioning it by name), it is notable that the current and former Muftis of Egypt, and some of the prominent leaders of the Al-Azhar theological school in Egypt, are among the signers. In Egypt, Al-Azhar is the most im-

portant institution of Sunni Islam, where many prominent Arab, Asian, and African scholars are educated.

Another very important signer is Dr. Ahmed al-Kubaisi, an Iraqi scholar, living in exile in the United Arab Emirates. Al-Kubaisi, who is familiar with Lyndon LaRouche’s activities, and who signed a call supporting “the LaRouche Doctrine for Southwest Asia” in 2004, has become the most outspoken Sunni scholar against the Saudi-controlled Wahhabi sect. He has a regular TV show in the U.A.E., on which he has attacked the Wahhabis and Saudi Arabia for being the source of this evil, which has now taken the shape of IS.

Dr. al-Kubaisi has also denounced the IS as a Western and Israeli intelligence ploy to divide the nations of the region and defame Islam as a religion. There have been several campaigns in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states in the past year demanding that U.A.E. leader Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed oust al-Kubaisi from the country. But al-Kubaisi, who was an opponent of the Saddam Hussein regime, too, was granted protection in the U.A.E. by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nhayan, father of the current leader. According to Arab traditions and norms, the son cannot break with this covenant of protection.

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